

An Introduction  
to  
**"The Misfortunes of Arthur"**

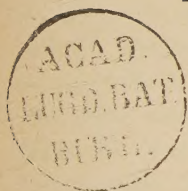
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*“The Misfortunes of Arthur by Thomas Hughes  
and Others. Edited with an Introduction, Notes  
and Glossary”*

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## I. Importance of the Play.

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The first question that is likely to occur to the reader of this edition of "The Misfortunes of Arthur" we may assume to be relative to the importance of the play. "Why", he may ask, "was the 'old stuff' unearthed from the antiquated rubbish of a by-gone age"? He may even supplement and vary his question with the classical exclamation: "This is the silliest stuff that e'er I heard!"<sup>1)</sup> Yet if he has had the patience to plod through the whimsical spelling of the text; to follow the ghost of Gorlois as he "gluttes on revenge" from the opening of the drama to its close; to turn an attentive and forbearing ear to the windy speeches of the "Nuntius", and the sing-song recitations of the "Chorus", he may, perhaps, not throw the book aside, but keeping it, add:<sup>2)</sup> "The best in this kind are but shadows; and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them."

The fact may be that few will care to concern themselves with our curious play except those who are attracted by the curious and the old, i. e. antiquaries; and those who, for the sake of a clear and correct understanding of the history of the English Drama in particular

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<sup>1)</sup> Mids. V. 212.

<sup>2)</sup> Mids. V. 213.

and of English literature in general, spare themselves no pains with dusty book-shelves and forgotten prints, tedious and dry though they be. This second class of readers comprise an honored and useful school. They are our literary historians, who spend their lives in answering just such questions as that of our imaginary reader. They classify and arrange, deduce and generalize: they show the genesis, growth and full flower of a species. If they be naturalists, they may bear the names of Darwin or Agassiz; if they be engaged in the field of comparative literature, they may call themselves Wilhelm Scherer or Stopford Brooke. They build up a system of philosophy in respect to literary phenomena. They help the world to a clearer view and a better appreciation of the sublimities of a Shakspeare. They light up the whole field of literature, showing the bearings of its various elements to each other and to a great and epoch-making author. The literary critic, in other words, has come to be a thinker, who, instead of spinning fine phrases in the exposition of his personal likes and dislikes, searches for cause and effect, finding many causes in "silly stuff" and a world of effects in a Hamlet's soliloquy.

The importance of our play, then, lies in the importance of the effects to which it constitutes a cause. It is a link in a chain. The link may have some importance per se; on the other hand, it may derive most of its importance from the chain, or from the very last, or the biggest, link of the chain. In our case we need not hesitate to call our biggest link (or the last one, if we choose to end with the climax) — William Shakspeare. Our minor satellite, to vary the metaphor, — our "Misfortunes of Arthur", shines with much reflected light, just as well-nigh the entire mass of pre-Shakspearean dramas derives interest from the final phenomenon to which they lead and point the way.



What has the "Misfortunes of Arthur" contributed to Shakspeare? This is a question which, if isolated, it is impossible to answer; in fact, it would seem absurd. What has the class of dramas to which "The Misfortunes of Arthur" belongs, contributed to Shakspeare? That is a question which can not only be rationally entertained, but admits of some systematic reply.

To answer it we are obliged to ask still more pointedly: What are the class of dramas of which the present text forms a member?

The Shakspearean type of tragedy is known to have two main sources: 1. The old national drama; 2. the Senecan tragedy. Of these two branches the second is the one which concerns us here.

For the causes which led to the growth of a Senecan tragedy in England we must look to the revival of learning, which found its first impetus in Italy, whence it spread to France and, finally, to the British Isles. First the Italian lyric poetry was transplanted, then the Italian novel. Finally, the men of learning and of the court, wondering much at the popularity of "transcripts from Seneca" (to quote Mr. Symonds) "on the boards of Rome, Florence and Ferrara", invoked the classic Muse again, but this time the sententious goddess of Seneca, the pedantic philosopher-tragedian of Nero's Rome.

The first offspring of this marriage of the classic Muse was the tragedy known by the double title of "Gorboduc" or "Ferrex and Porrex" (1560). It is highly important as being the first tragedy in the English tongue, and, further, as being the first drama to use the now classic form of blank-verse. We have named the new species of English composition of which this is the head, "Copies of Seneca", inasmuch as such a close dependance on their pattern as to warrant the term "copy" has been exhaustively proved, as to sentiment, by a long and

formidable array of parallel passages and even literal translations, in Mr. Cunliffe's book.<sup>1)</sup>

The second of this species is "Tancred and Gismunda" (1568), and the third, "The Misfortunes of Arthur" (1587).<sup>2)</sup>

A still closer connection is established by inquiring into the nature of the species, and comparing it with that of Seneca's plays. The inquiry shall be made both as to form and subject-matter.

#### a) As to Form.

Seneca, following the precepts of Horace ("Ars Poetica") and of Varro,<sup>3)</sup> divides his versified orations into five acts, and these, in turn, into scenes. This division was merely arbitrary, having no effect in helping the play or in retarding it. We suspect that Seneca intended his plays to be read and not acted. They are philosophical orations cast in the form of iambs and recited before fashionable audiences of "Roman ladies and gentlemen assembled at each other's gardens, in clubs and in coteries."<sup>4)</sup> So much the satirists of that pedantic, decadent period would lead us to believe. But, without the aid of these hints, we might, from purely internal evidence of the plays themselves, arrive at similar conclusions. These plays (drawing no distinction between pseudo-Senecan and genuine Senecan plays) are: Phaedra, Thyestes, Octavia, Oedipus, Medea, Hercules Oeteus, Troas, Agamemnon, Hercules Furens, Thebais.<sup>5)</sup> They show but few instances, for example, of dramatic action. Almost all the

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<sup>1)</sup> The Influence of Seneca on Elizabethan Tragedy. App. II.

<sup>2)</sup> Ibid. p. 21.

<sup>3)</sup> Ibid. p. 32.

<sup>4)</sup> Symonds: Shakspeare's Predecessors in the Eng. Drama. p. 219.

<sup>5)</sup> R. Fischer: „Zur Kunstentwicklung der Eng. Tragödie“. p. 24.

events and crises, horrible, bloody and revolting though they be — material, we see, that neither Marlowe nor Shakspeare disdained to use — occur behind the scenes,<sup>1)</sup> and are left to be narrated in long and inflated speeches, in which all the rhetorical arts of a schoolman are brought into play. Hippolytus, Agamemnon, Creon, Creusa, Hercules, Astyanax, Polyxena and Tantalus — all give up the ghost decently, that is to say, behind the scenes; the ghosts of Laius and Achilles remain in the same polite seclusion, while Hercules Oeteus and Oedipus also refrain from obtruding their personal sufferings upon the vulgar gaze. It must not be forgotten that there appear some notable exceptions to this rule: as when Phaedra and Jocasta commit suicide before the public eye; Medea plunges the knife into her children on the open stage; Hercules indulges in a mad revelry of blood, to which Megaera and her children fall victims in the presence of the audience etc.<sup>2)</sup> In spite of the exceptions, the instances of the lack of visible action are so numerous as to have given rise to the classical rule of the “stage-decencies”.

It follows from the observance of the “stage-decencies”, and from the general lack of action, that the form of the plays would assume a distinct stamp. The narrative or versified story of past occurrences had to be cast in the form of a long speech recited by the ubiquitous “Nuntius”<sup>3)</sup> with all possible sophistical gravity and rhetorical embellishment. This would naturally take on what Fischer terms an epic tone.<sup>4)</sup> The same author has skilfully invoked the aid of arithmetic in his postulates, and finds

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<sup>1)</sup> Ibid: p. 3.

<sup>2)</sup> R. Fischer: l. c.

<sup>3)</sup> J. A. Symonds: Shakspeare's Predecessors in the Eng. Drama. p. 218.

<sup>4)</sup> R. Fischer: l. c., p. 4 seq.



that, on the average, fully one quarter of the entire Senecan play is made up of monologue<sup>1)</sup>, or pure declamation.

It is another cast-iron rule of Seneca's not to allow more than three personages to engage in dialogue at once<sup>2)</sup>. By actual count it has been shown that out of a total of 104 instances, but 13 have called for the full limit of 3 personages<sup>3)</sup>. The dialogue is hence expected to bear a narrative, or, to add a new characteristic, an idyllic or lyrical stamp. It shows few of the features of dramatic action, as we understand the term to-day. Both monologue and dialogue are, in fully one half of the total number of Senecan scenes, intended to awaken in the spectator a peculiar poetic mood — a quality which is happily expressed by the German term "Stimmungsszenen".<sup>4)</sup>

All the foregoing elements of style and technique are in absolute harmony with the cardinal canon of classical dramatic composition, viz. that of the three unities. This is understood to have been a perfectly natural and necessary condition of dramatic structure with the Greeks. The continuous presence of the Chorus in Greek tragedy implied the unity of time, of place and of action. With Seneca we note a severance of the Chorus from the action — a circumstance which removes all necessity for the unities, and renders their observance a piece of mere arbitrary pedantry.<sup>5)</sup> If, as seems evident, Seneca had but an imperfect conception of the functions of the Chorus and the uses of the unities, it need give us no surprise to find the same confusion prevailing with his copyists and

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<sup>1)</sup> R. Fischer: l. c., 13: „Selbstgespräche oder Ansprachen an eine stumme Umgebung“.

<sup>2)</sup> Ibid: p. 14. J. W. Cunliffe: *The Influence of Seneca on Elizabethan Tragedy*. p. 39.

<sup>3)</sup> Fischer p. 13.

<sup>4)</sup> Ibid: p. 11.

<sup>5)</sup> J. W. Cunliffe: l. c.



all directly influenced by him down to Kyd, Marlowe and Shakspeare.

Seneca's Chorus is, with a few unimportant exceptions, a device to entertain the audience between the acts, and could be cut out without effecting the play in the least.<sup>1)</sup> It usually presents a philosophical commentary on the occurrences of the plot, dwelling on such familiar themes as the golden mean, fate, death, eternal change, love, peace, praise to the Gods.<sup>2)</sup> In other words, the Chorus personifies the ideal spectator,<sup>3)</sup> and is intended to aid the audience to extract the proper moral from what they had just heard declaimed.

This, however, cannot be said of the Ghost. With him it is different. He is an important functionary, without whom the plot would gravitate to a still lower degree of monotony. He is at once spectacular, and awe-inspiring in his utterances, which form the key and kernel to the entire fabric of the drama. Usually he appears at the opening of the first act to announce his deep-seated thirst for revenge and his unflinching purpose to roam a lurid terror until his desire has been appeased. He often closes the play in exulting joy over the success of his awful plans, which had come to full fruition in the blood and thunder of the intervening five acts. The ghost of Tantalus, e. g., opens the "Thyestes"; the ghost of Thyestes brings a breath of the lower world into "Agamemnon"; the ghost of Agrippina into "Octavia"; the ghosts of Achilles and Hector into the "Troas". The ghost of Britannicus terrifies "Octavia"; the ghost of Laius haunts

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<sup>1)</sup> Ibid. p. 33. R. Fischer: Zur Kunstentwicklung der Eng. Trag. 8.

<sup>2)</sup> R. Fischer: 10. Cunliffe: 21, 22.

<sup>3)</sup> Fischer, l. c. 10.

Oedipus in the "Thebais"; while Medea is spurred on to revenge by her murdered brother's spirit.<sup>1)</sup>

Let us allow this visitant from the lower world to introduce us to some acquaintances of his — other typical characters of the Roman tragedian. We shall again adopt Fischer's happy nomenclature and classification.<sup>2)</sup>

We find that the plot centres in two chief characters — the hero and his adversary. Using a modern expression, we might not inappropriately call the latter character the villain — although the term would lack accuracy; it would serve us only in so far as to help us to an approximate conception of the enemy's personal make-up — so far, indeed, as he has any personality. He is generally a type, serving as a mouth-piece for sententious rhetoric — a statement which applies to the hero as well, and, with no less truth, to all the minor personages.

Auxiliary to each hero stands his confidant, to whom he unbosoms himself, and with whom he often engages in a highly-strung sort of conversation, abounding in point and epigram — a species of dialogue which the Greeks named *stichomythia*.<sup>3)</sup> This auxiliary personage is usually a servant. Not only does he act as a receptacle for his master's overflowing bile, or good spirits, as the case may be, but he is drawn into counsel. He advises and spurs on; or he dissuades and holds back — sometimes a force making for good, sometimes a weight dragging down to disaster. The same sort of typical personage, exactly, stands along-side of, and auxiliary to, the adversary, drawing him into one course of action, or pushing him into another, with more or less success, according as the chief figure

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<sup>1)</sup> J. W. Cunliffe: *The Influence of Seneca on Elizabethan Tragedy*: p. 45.

<sup>2)</sup> R. Fischer: *Zur Kunstentwicklung der Eng. Trag.* pp. 18, 19—21.

<sup>3)</sup> Cunliffe: p. 20.

listens or is deaf to counsel or wily intrigue. In either case, whether as servant of the hero or the adversary, he usually appears in the singular number. In exceptional instances he may have his double, in which event the two gyrate alternately about the same master. It is not infrequent to find this confidant a female masquerading under the generic title of Nutrix. Especially will this be the case if the play contains a heroine. As exceptions should be mentioned Hercules Furens, whose confidant is an old friend: Nero, who confides in his teacher, Seneca; Oedipus, who unbosoms himself to his wife, Jocasta; Hercules Oetaeus, who calls into counsel his mother, Alcmene, and his son, Hyllus.<sup>1)</sup>

The dialogue and monologue of these three types of character comprise the bulk of the Senecan tragedy. Where they fail to declaim the entire plot (of which there is but little), they are succeeded on the stage by a very useful figure in the person of the Messenger (Nuntius), who narrates in long speeches of embroidered rhetoric, as the others had done in dialogue, the occurrence of unseen murders, suicides and other deeds of blood and horror.<sup>2)</sup> The other *dramatis personae* are of a conglomerate type; they are few in number and play a very minor part.<sup>3)</sup>

#### b) As to Subject-matter.

The bloody character of the Senecan tragedy has already been referred to. This has been set forth by no less an authority than Shakspeare, an authority of first rank in this point also -- at least if we believe him to be the author of "Titus Andronicus". For "Titus Andronicus" is the-

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<sup>1)</sup> Fischer: pp. 18, 19, 20.

<sup>2)</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3)</sup> Ibid.



acme of all things bloody and revolting. Of it and its Roman prototype it may be said that it is made up of

“\* \* murders, rapes and massacres,  
Acts of black night, abominable deeds,  
Complots of mischief, treason, villainies.”<sup>1)</sup>

Or, turning to Scaliger, the French rhetorician of the Renaissance period, we shall gain no mistaken idea from his list of requisites to a tragedy in general. The list will serve well as a definition of our Senecan tragedy in particular. It reads:

“Res tragicae grandes, atroces, jussa regum, caedes, desperationes, suspendia, exilia, orbitates, parricidia, incestus, incendia, pugnae, occaecationes, fletus, ululatus, conquestiones, funera, epitaphia, epicedia.”<sup>2)</sup>

Dr. Cunliffe presents the matter thus:

“His (Seneca’s) subjects are the most sensational he could choose; — the horrid banquet of Thyestes: the murder of Agamemnon by his faithless wife and her paramour; the guilty love of Phaedra; the execution of Astyanax and Polyxena; the revenge of Medea; the slaughter of Megaera and her children; the fatal jealousy of Deianira; the incest and parricide of Oedipus and the unnatural strife of his sons. In Octavia . . . the theme is of lust and blood.”<sup>3)</sup>

To sum up categorically: The following features are characteristic of the Senecan play: —

A. As to Form:

1. Five acts.
2. Lack of action; the consequent length of the speeches; their epical and lyrical tone.

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<sup>1)</sup> Tit. And. V. 1. 63—65.

<sup>2)</sup> Quoted in Prof. Schick’s Introduction to his edition of “The Spanish Tragedy.” p. XXXIX.

<sup>3)</sup> The Influence of Seneca on Elizabethan Tragedy. p. 17.

3. Observance of three cardinal rules:

- a) That of the so-called stage-decencies.
- b) That of the three actors.
- c) That of the three unities.

4. The characters:

- a) The Chorus.
- b) The ghost.
- c) The hero and his adversary.
- d) The confidant (either servant or "Nutrix").
- e) The messenger ("Nuntius").

B. Subject-matter.

These features are found to blossom as the rose in the typical copies of Seneca—especially in "Gorboduc"<sup>1)</sup> and "The Misfortunes of Arthur". Of course, a servile copy is out of the question, for we find a number of cardinal rules and prime usages of the Latin play-wright either stretched to bursting because misunderstood, or wilfully violated because of the popular love of the spectacular and the insistent influence of the national tragedy.

To a misconception of the purpose of the unities, as has already been shown, is due the breach of the law of the unities. To the English love of the spectacular is due the disregard of the stage-decencies. To the influence of the national tragedy, again, is to be attributed the relative wealth of fable and an increase in the number of actors. But most of the characteristics remain. Most important of all these is the division into five acts, which "Gorboduc" is, as we should expect, the first to show. The same division appears in "The Misfortunes of Arthur", and has become the common property of all drama from Shakspeare downwards.

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<sup>1)</sup> Toulmin Smith's edition. p. XII. A. Ward's "English Dramatic Literature": I. 218 seq.

The long speech is still in evidence, though not quite so elaborate and verbose as in the Latin pattern.

Obtrusive in its unfailing presence is the Chorus with its sententious commentary at the close of each act. It, too, is purely Senecan, in that it forms no intrinsic and indispensable part of the text or story. It sings its song in the most approved Senecan style. In "The Misfortunes of Arthur" it assumes an exceptional rôle. It takes the part of an actor in act V. and engages in dialogue with Arthur. It joins him in woeful and moving lamentations over the fateful outcome of the battle. In "Gorboduc" the chorus is sung by "four auncient and sage men of Brittain."

The ghost, strange to say, does not haunt "Gorboduc", but waits until the very late day of "The Misfortunes of Arthur" (1587) to make his début, where we recognize him at once as the double of Tantalus in "Thyestes", and a descendant of Euripides' Polydorus in "Hecuba". He retains his old importance. The fact of his début here lends our play no little interest, drawing it into close relationship with Kyd's "Spanish Tragedy" and Shakspeare's "Julius Caesar", "Macbeth" and "Hamlet." That the functions of the Shakspearean ghost and his effectiveness are vastly different from those of the pre-Shakspearean pioneer of ghostdom, surprises no one who remembers how the master transformed all crude ore — whether dug up by his own hands or found ready for use — in the alembic of his refining genius.

The straw-figures known by the generic name of confidant, set up mainly for the purpose of talking at the hero and being talked at by him, are not lacking either in "Gorboduc"<sup>1)</sup> or in "The Misfortunes of Arthur". In "Gorboduc" they bear the individual names of

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<sup>1)</sup> Edited by Toulmin Smith, 1883, and by J. M. Manly, "Specimens of the Pre-Shakspearean Drama", II. 215 seq. — 1898.



“Eubulus, secretarie to the king.”

“Arostus, a counsellor to the king.”

“Dordan, a counsellor to Ferrex.”

“Philander, a counsellor to Porrex.”

“Hermon, a parasite remaining with Ferrex.”

In “The Misfortunes of Arthur” these puppets are named:

“Fronia, a lady of her [the Queen’s] trayne.”

“Angharad, sister to the Queene.”

“Conan, a faithfull counsellor” [to Mordred].

“Cador, Duke of Cornwall” [Counsellor to Arthur].

The messenger also plays a heavy rôle in both “Gorboduc” and “The Misfortunes of Arthur”. In our play he is made to carry the entire first scene of the second act. He narrates in grandiloquent pentameter the glorious victory of Arthur over Tiberius of Rome, after nine long years of war. Arthur sends Tiberius’ dead body to the capital of the Romans in reply to their demand for “tribute due by the conquest of Caesar.” Arthur returns to Britain to find his son Mordred usurper of his throne and heading a rebellion against him. The ensuing battle results in the death of both Mordred and, later, of Arthur. A description of the conflict is declaimed in the second scene of the fourth act by the Nuntius, who thus appears the second time in the play. His office corresponds exactly to that of the Senecan messenger.

It is remarkable that the subject-matter (or fable, to use the translation of an appropriate German term) of two of our copies, “Gorboduc” and “The Misfortunes of Arthur,” is borrowed from the myth surrounding national heroes, which reminds us in general character, if not in direct source, of the Senecan resort to Greek mythology — what Fischer aptly denominates “Sagenhaftes Fürstenschicksal.”<sup>1)</sup>

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<sup>1)</sup> Zur Kunstentwicklung der Englischen Tragödie: p. 2.

It now remains to point out the prime differences of the Senecan copies from their pattern. First of all comes the loose structure of the plot, already referred to. It bears witness to the health and assertive life of the national growth, which was rich in fable and knew no unities except in a merely superficial sense. The ghost links together the five acts of "The Misfortunes of Arthur" by opening and closing the drama. His connection with the play is highly artificial. He takes no part in what little action there is.

The dumb-show is a stage device foreign to Seneca. It is a heritage of the miracle and morality plays. It brings a breath of the fresh and healthy air of "merrie England" into the atmosphere vitiated by sulphurous spectres and nauseating crimes. It relieves the tedium of much grave moralizing with a little of the spectacular. A combination of tableau and pantomime<sup>1)</sup>, it presents an allegorical picture of the forthcoming act. It arouses interest by stimulating the Englishman's in-born love for action, which, to this day, finds characteristic expression in the vulgar term "show" applied to all sorts of stage performances from "Hamlet" down to the tricks of the juggler or the acrobat.

Amusing is the necessity of a commentary to the dumb-show. Important is the use which Shakspeare made of this sort of device in, e. g. "Hamlet" III. ii.; "Macbeth" IV. i.; "King Henry the Eighth" IV. ii.

The outward form of a work of literature, even when considered entirely apart from the subject-matter, is such a vital characteristic as to serve well in classifying the various species of literary production. We think, perhaps first of all and mainly, of the tripping rhythm and jingling

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<sup>1)</sup> J. A. Symonds: "Shakspeare's Predecessors in the English Drama." pp. 230, 231.

rhyme in speaking of lyric poetry — apart from the airy fancy and sweet sentiment. So, in speaking of tragedy, it is quite natural to hold forth the stately stride of blank verse as a prominent feature — apart from the brave and heroic tone of the language. We need but advert to Marlowe and Shakspeare to make this plain. The text now under consideration assumes further importance in that it may have served to hand down to these masters their mighty instrument of tragic expression. It, in turn, may have received the heritage from “Gorboduc”. “Gorboduc” adopted the measure from the Earl of Surrey’s translation of the second and fourth books of Virgil’s Aeneid whilst Surrey himself may have copied it from the *Versi sciolti* of the Italians.<sup>1)</sup>

The foregoing analysis is intended to lay bare not only Hughes’ indebtedness to Seneca, but (using Klein’s<sup>2)</sup> figure) to show how the Senecan leaven working in the dramatic dough of all European countries, and England as well, was transmitted by Hughes and his class to the full loaf of Shakspeare.

It is undeniable that the yeast might have operated, or even did operate, upon Shakspeare through other channels than that which we have just examined. If it be true, as some critics would teach, that Seneca was a favorite school-author in Elizabeth’s time and that Shakspeare read the tragedies in the original Latin at the Stratford grammar-school<sup>3)</sup>, we may ascribe the Senecan elements in his plays to just as simple a source, and a more direct one. But this assumption is rendered somewhat doubtful by Ben Jonson’s famous criticism of his contemporary that he knew “small Latin and less Greek”.

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<sup>1)</sup> J. A. Symonds’ “Shakspeare’s Predecessors in the English Drama”. p. 336.

<sup>2)</sup> „Geschichte des Dramas”, V. 236.

<sup>3)</sup> E. g., T. S. Baynes: “What Shakespeare Learnt at School”. Fraser’s Magazine, Nov. 1879.

Another point of contact with the Senecan leaven is possible: Shakspeare may have seen the translations of Seneca begun in 1560 by Jasper Heywood with the "Troas", and collected and edited in 1581 by Thomas Newton, who contributed a translation of the "Thebais". The book, or rather the supposed use of it, had a bilious effect on Thos. Nash, who wrote of it: "Yet English Seneca read by candle-light yeeldes many good sentences, as Blood is a beggar, and so foorth: and if you intreate him faire in a frostie morning, he will affoord you whole Hamlets, I should say, handfulls, of tragicall speeches".

Or, the foreign imitators of Seneca operating on Gascoigne, who, in 1566, recast Ludovico Dolce's "Giocasta"; operating on Lady Pembroke (Mary Sidney), who, in 1592, published a translation of Garnier's "Antonie"; operating on Thomas Kyd, who, in 1594, rendered the same Frenchman's "Cornelie" into English, — all, or severally, might have sufficed to invest the Shakspearean cake with Senecan yeast.

"Howe'er it be" — it is superfluous here to discuss this question any further. We can only point to the final result, saying "There is the full measure — Shakspeare: the exact proportions of the ingredients are, perhaps, beyond the ken of mortal chemist; eat and be filled."

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## II. The Sources of the Play.

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It may be a rash act to controvert the opinions of such eminent historians of the Drama as Collier, Ward, Klein and Prölss, all of whom, excepting Ward, point somewhat vaguely to the Arthurian legends as the source of "The Misfortunes of Arthur". Whether they wish to refer to either of the poems "Le Morte Arthur"<sup>1)</sup> and "Morte Arthure",<sup>2)</sup> or to the compilation of romances by Syr Thomas Malory, it is somewhat difficult to gather from their language.

Collier says<sup>3)</sup>: "The substance of the story is to be found in the 'Morte Arthur'". Klein is a little more explicit when he states: "Der Fabelstoff ist aus dem \* \* Poem 'Morte Arthure' geschöpft".<sup>4)</sup> Prölss virtually joins hands with Klein when he writes: "Der Stoff ist dem alten Gedichte 'Morte d'Arthur' entnommen".<sup>5)</sup>

There can be no doubt, however, about Ward's meaning. His language is<sup>6)</sup>: "Its [our drama's] subject is taken,

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<sup>1)</sup> Ed. by F. J. Furnivall, 1864.

<sup>2)</sup> Ed. by Edmund Brock, 1871, E. E. T. S. No. 8.

<sup>3)</sup> Collier's Preface to "The Misfortunes of Arthur" in Vol. IV of Dodsley-Hazlitt's "Old English Plays", p. 253.

<sup>4)</sup> Geschichte des englischen Dramas, Band II. p. 261.

<sup>5)</sup> Geschichte des neueren Dramas. Band 2,2, p. 28.

<sup>6)</sup> English Dramatic Literature, 1899. Vol. I. p. 219.

apparently without the intervention of any later literary treatment, from that *Morte d'Arthur* which, according to a well-known statement by Roger Ascham, had, in his 'forefathers' time' formed the staple literary entertainment of the English Court." Of course, no other than Malory is meant.

Oskar H. Sommer, the skilled editor of Malory's romances, arrays himself alongside of Ward with the sweeping assertion, that<sup>1)</sup> "From the day of its appearance '*Le Morte Darthur*' has been the source of every production having for its theme King Arthur and his knights".

With regard to the poems, "*Morte Arthure*" and "*Le Morte Arthur*", be it said: that in Thomas Hughes' time (ab. 1588) they existed only in manuscript form, and could hardly have fallen into his hands; furthermore, the stories, in the rough, agree, in neither case, with that of "*The Misfortunes of Arthur*" — let alone details of narrative.<sup>2)</sup>

With regard to Malory, the extreme popularity of the book, both prior to and during the time when Hughes, Fulbecke and Trotte put quill to paper — together with the vast compass of the contents — make imperative a more minute investigation.

Notwithstanding the authoritative statements of Sommer and Ward, it shall, nevertheless, be the purpose of this chapter to show that the evidence rests not with Malory's work, but with the "*Historia Britonum*" of Geoffrey of Monmouth.

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<sup>1)</sup> "*Le Morte Darthur* by Syr Thomas Malory", ed. by Oskar H. Sommer. Vol. III. Intr. p. 2.

<sup>2)</sup> That the chronicles of Holinshed or Higden could have served as the source of Hughes' information and inspiration, is very unlikely. The accounts of both touching Arthur are little else than a brief and garbled résumé of Geoffrey's History, with an elaborate criticism of Geoffrey's trustworthiness. The effort to establish a close connection between Hughes and the chroniclers has been vain.

It is matter of common knowledge that of these two works, Geoffrey's is much the older — in fact, has been itself proved to be the fountain-head that gave rise to the many streams of Arthurian legend, which Malory, in turn, united in his voluminous book. It would be an easy solution of the problem of source to state that Nennius begat Geoffrey; Geoffrey begat Wace; Wace begat Layamon — all of whom, together with a number of other Arthurian romanticists and poets, principally French, begat Malory; and Malory begat Thomas Hughes with his seven colleagues in the composition of our Elizabethan drama, "The Misfortunes of Arthur".

This may have been precisely the trend of thought pursued by the dramatical historians and critics above cited. A closer examination of the facts will, it is hoped, serve to show that the simple story of the play — simple as compared with the involved variations of Malory's book — did not need to take so wide a *détour*, but sprang directly from the narrative of Geoffrey.

The statement of Roger Ascham in his "Scholemaster", Book I,<sup>1)</sup> that the "Morte Darthur" had been the principal book in the hands of his forefathers, combined with our knowledge of the fact that no less than six editions of the compilation, commencing with Caxton in 1485, and ending with Th. East about 1585,<sup>2)</sup> had appeared prior to the date, 1587, on the title-page of "The Misfortunes of Arthur", would seem to bespeak a greater popularity and a wider circle of readers for Malory in England, as against the two or three editions, Paris 1508 and 1517, and Heidelberg 1587<sup>3)</sup> (the last perhaps falling a little

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<sup>1)</sup> Ed. Henry Morley, Cassell's National Library, p. 83.

<sup>2)</sup> O. H. Sommer's ed. of "Le Morte Darthur". Vol. III. pp. 1 seq.

<sup>3)</sup> San-Marte in his ed. of Geoffrey of Monmouth's "Hist. Brit." pp. XLII, XLIII.

short of our reckoning) that can be mustered in favor of Geoffrey. But a greater popularity of Malory cannot disprove the claim to a great deal, albeit a lesser deal, of attention for Geoffrey, who, as a Latin author and a historian to boot, would naturally find favor with the schoolmen of his own and a later day. As Thomas Hughes, Bacon, Yelverton, Fulbecke, Trotte, and doubtless the others of the company of eight active in the presentation of the play, were men of classical attainments, as fond, we are told, of their Seneca as of

“— olde reports of altered laws,  
Clamours of courts, and cauls upon words —”<sup>1)</sup>

why should we do them the injustice of discrediting them with a knowledge of, or even a fondness for, the Latin accounts of Arthur and of Merlin? A detailed internal examination of the play, made above, shows its authors to be close copyists of the Seneca type of tragedy, of which Lady Pembroke, the translator of Garnier's "Antonie" and her brother, Sir Philip Sidney, the eulogist of those dramatists that "climb to the height of Seneca his style", may, from their rank and social position, be considered the chief admirers at the late day when our drama appeared. We may safely assume that they, as well as Queen Elizabeth, who made a long blank-verse translation from "Hercules Oetaeus", would delight as much in Geoffrey as in Malory. Moreover, a distinct precedent in every respect was already at hand in the shape of "Gorboduc", which resembles "The Misfortunes of Arthur" in having been acted before the Queen. The date of its presentation by the gentlemen of the Inner Temple, is the 18<sup>th</sup> of January, 1561. It had also been written for her special benefit by a pair of young men of

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<sup>1)</sup> Intr. to "Misf. of Arthur", lines 22—3.



the law, Sackville and Norton, who also drew upon Geoffrey of Monmouth for their source.<sup>1)</sup>

A general comparison of Malory with Geoffrey on the score of "motive", emphasizes the preponderating bulk of Malory, and, at the same time, proves the pith and purpose of the two to be different. The account of Geoffrey is but a bone on which the learned naturalist would build the huge frame of the ichthyosaurus. And, as stated, the "motives" of the two do not agree in much more than the name of Arthur and a few chief events of his career. The prime subject-matter of Geoffrey might be stated in a few words thus:

Uther's adultery.

Arthur's marriage with Guenevora.

His wars with Rome.

His journey to Avalon to heal his wound, received in the battle  
with Mordred.

Civil wars.

While that of Malory will not fail to present a striking contrast when condensed into the following brief compass:

Uther's adultery.

Arthur's wars.

Adventures of the knights of the Round Table.

Quest for the Holy Grail.

Arthur's glorious passing to the isle of Avalon.

His coming again.

"No amount of excision", says Herbert Coleridge (Preface to Furnivall's "Le Morte Arthur") "will make Malory's work agree with Geoffrey's; Malory is not Geoffrey plus a mass of romantic detail; the 'motives' of the two accounts are different in kind, and cannot be reconciled".

When we analyze the drama in the light of this difference, we find that it contains all the essential elements of the

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<sup>1)</sup> Toulmin Smith's edition of "Gorboduc", p. XI.

"*Historia Britonum*" (except the fourth), as stated above, and but three essential elements — the first two and the fifth — of "*Le Morte Darthur*". Civil wars as the sequent penalty of adultery is, in brief, the precise point and marrow of both the drama and history, while, whatever the single or multiple "motives" of the compilation of Malory's romances may be, they are certainly not identical with the above. See particularly in this connection the speeches of Gorlois at the opening and close of the play, together with the closing chapters of Geoffrey's History.

The following text-comparison may place the matter in a still clearer light:

### Geoffrey.

"*Historia Regum Britanniae*" VIII. xix. 9. (San-Marte p. 116).

Festo etiam paschali superveniente: praecepit proceribus regni in eandem urbem [Londinium] convenire, ut sumpto diademate tantum diem cum honore celebraret. Paruerunt ergo cuncti. \* \* \* \* \* Celebravit itaque solennitatem rex ut proposuerat: et gaudio cum proceribus suis indulsit. \* \* \* \* \* Advenerant namque tot nobiles cum conjugibus et filiabus suis, laeto convivio digni. Aderat inter caeteros Gorlois dux Cornubiae, cum Igera conjuge sua, cujus pulchritudo mulieres omnes totius Britanniae superabat. Cumque inter alias inspexisset eam rex, subito amore illius incaluit: ita ut postpositis caeteris, totam intentionem suam circa eam verte-

### Malory.

"*Le Morte Darthur*."  
(Oskar H. Sommer.)

Book i: — Capitulum Primum.  
p. 35.

Hit befel in the dayes of Vther pendragon when he was kyng of all England / \* \* there was a myghty duke in Cornewail that helde warre ageynst hym long tyme / And the duke was called the duke of Tyntagil / and so by meanes kyng Vther send for this duk / chargyng hym to brynge his wyf with hym / for she was called a fair lady / and a passynge wyfe / and her name was called Igrayne / So whan the duke and his wyf were comyn vnto the kyng by the meanes of grete lordes \* \* \* / the kyng lyked and loued this lady wel and he made them grete chere out of mesure / and desyred to haue lyen by her / But she was

ret. \* \* \* Arridebat ei multotiens, jocosa verba interserebat. Quod cum comperisset maritus ejus, confestim iratus est, et ex curia sine licentia recessit. \* \* \* Iratus itaque Uther, praecepit ei redire in curiam suam ut de illata injuria rectitudinem sumeret ab eo: cui cum parere diffugisset Gorlois, \* \* \* collegit exercitum magnum rex, petivitque provinciam Cornubiae, atque ignem in urbes et oppida accumulavit. At Gorlois non ausus est congregi cum eo, quia ejus minor erat armatorum copia \* \*: et cum magis pro uxore sua quam pro se ipso anxiretur: posuit eam in oppido Tintagol in littore maris \* \* \* (p. 117) rex Merlinum vocari jussit: \* \* Vocatus confestim Merlinus, cum in praesentia regis astitisset, jussus est consilium dare, quo rex desiderium in Igera expleret. Qui \* \* \* ait: \* \* 'Scio medicaminibus meis dare figuram Gorlois, ita ut per omnia ipse videaris. Si itaque parueris, faciam te prorsus simulare eum: \* \* Alia autem specie sumpta, adero tertius poterisque tuto oppidum adire ad Igernam, ac aditum habere.' —

Paruit itaque rex, diligentemque animum adhibuit \* \* \* et in speciem Gorlois transmutatus est. \* \* \* Mansit itaque rex ea nocte cum Igera, et sese desiderata Venere refecit. \* \* \* Concepit itaque eadem nocte celeberrimum illum Arturum. \* \* \*

a passyng good woman / and wold not assente vnto the kynge / And thenne she told the duke her husband and said I suppose that we were sente for that I shold be dishonoured Wherfor husband I counceille yow that we departe from hens sodenly that we maye ryde all nyghte vnto oure owne castell / and in lyke wyse as she saide so they departed / that neyther the kynge nor none of his counceill were ware of their departyng. Also soone as kyng Vther knewe of theire departyng soo sodenly / he was wonderly wrothe / Thenne he called to hym his pryuy counceille \* \* \* Thenne haue ye cause [said they] to make myghty werre vpon hym / Soo that was done \* \* / ('So his wyf Dame Igrayne he [the Duke] putte in the castell of Tyntagil / And hym self he putte in the castel of Terrabyl \* \* / Thenne in alle haste came Vther with a grete hoost / and leyd a syege aboute the castel of Terrabil / \* \* \*

#### Capitulum Secundum.

\* \* And thenne Merlyn was bounde to come to the kynge \* \* \* / <sup>2</sup>) Now make you redy said Merlyn this nyght ye shalle lye with Igrayne in the castel of Tyntigayll / & ye shalle be lyke the duke her husband \* \* \* / But the duke of Tyntigail aspyed hou the kyng rode fro the syege of tarabil / & therfor that nyghte he

<sup>1</sup>) p. 36.    <sup>2</sup>) p. 37.

p. 118. Caput XX.

Interea \* \* exercitus ejus \* \* conatur \* \* obsessum comitem ad praelium provocare. \* \* \* pugnantes ergo hinc et inde inter primos interfectus est Gorlois, \* \* [Rex] reversus itaque ad oppidum Tintagol, cepit illud. Cepitque Igernam et voto suo positus est. Commanserunt deinde pariter non minimo amore ligati: progenueruntque filium et filiam. Fuit autem filii nomen Arturus, filiae vero Anna.

p. 119. Caput XXII.

\* \* \* Et cum omnes in praesentia sua conspexisset, \* \* [Uther rex] juravit \* \* quod ipsemet eos in hostes conduceret. Praecepit itaque fieri sibi feretrum quo asportaretur. \* \* \*

p. 120. Caput XXIV.

Devicti autem Saxones, non ideo a malitia sua destiterunt: \* \* \* (p. 121) Erat namque prope aulam fons nitidissimae aquae, quam rex solitus fuerat potare, cum caeteros liquores propter infirmitatem abhorreret. Fontem namque aggressi sunt nefandi proditores, ipsumque undique veneno infecerunt, ita ut manans aqua tota corrumperetur. Ut ergo potavit rex ex ea, festinae morti succubuit. \* \*

**Liber Nonus.**

p. 121. Caput I.

Defuncto igitur Utherpendragon, convenerunt ex diversis pro-

yssued oute of the castel \* \* \* for to haue distressid the kynges hooste / And so \* \* \* the duke hym self was slayne \* \* so \* \* \* kyng Vther lay with Igrayne \* \* / and begat on her that nyght arthur. \* \* \*

**Capitulum Tercium.**

\* \* \* <sup>1)</sup>Thenne when the lady was delyuerd the kyng com-maunded ij knyghtes & ij ladyes to take the child bound in a cloth of gold / & that ye delyuer hym to what poure man ye mete at the posterne yate of the castel / So the child was delyuerd vnto Merlyn / and so he bare it forth vnto Syre Ector / and made an holy man to crysten hym / and named hym Arthur / and so sir Ectors wyf nourysshed hym with her owne pappe / Thenne within two yeres kyng Vther felle seke of a grete maladye / And in the meane whyle hys enemyes Vsurped vpon hym / and dyd a grete bataylle vpon his men / \* \* \* and they caryed the kyng forth in an hors lyttar with a grete hooste towarde his enemyes \* \* \* / And thenne the kyng retorned vnto london and made grete ioye of his victory / And thenne he fyll passynge sore seke / so that thre dayes & thre nyghtes he was specheles / \* \* \* & therwith he yelde vp the ghost \* \* \* \*

<sup>2)</sup> (From) The table or rubrysshe of the contente of

<sup>1)</sup> p. 39. <sup>2)</sup> p. 6.



vinciis procures Britonum in civitatem Cilcestriae: Dubricio urbis Legionum Archiepiscopo suggerentes, ut Arturum filium regis in regem consecraret. \* \* \* Erat autem Arturus quindecim annorum juvenis. \* \* \*

p. 128. Caput IX.

\* \* \* Lot autem, qui tempore Aurelii Ambrosii sororem ipsius duxerat: ex qua Walgannum et Modedrium genuerat: ad consulatum Londonesiae caeterarumque comprovinciarum \* \* \* [Arturus] reduxit. \* \* \* Denique cum totius patriae statum in pristinam dignitatem reduxisset, duxit uxorem Guanhumaram ex nobili genere Romanorum editam: quae \* \* \* totius insulae mulieres pulchritudine superabat.

Caput X.

Adveniente deinde sequenti aestate, paravit classem suam, adivitque Hyberniae insulam, quam sibi subdere desiderabat \* \* \* Emensa deinde hyeme, reversus est in Britanniam, statumque regni in firmam pacem renovans, moram duodecim annis ibidem fecit.

p. 131. Caput XI.

Emensis iterum novem annis, cum totius Galliae partes suae potestati submisisset, venit iterum Arturus Parisios \* \* \*

chapytresshortly of the fyrst book of kyng Arthur / \* \* \* how Arthur was chosen kyng and of wondres and meruaylles of a swerde taken out of a stone by the sayd Arthur capitulo iij iiij & v.

Capitulum XIX.

\* \* \* <sup>1)</sup>kyng Arthur rode vnto Carlyon / And thyder cam to hym kyng Lots wyf of Orkeney in maner of a message / but she was sente thyder to aspye the Courte of kyng Arthur / and she cam rychely bisene with her four sones / gawayn <sup>2)</sup>Gaherys / Agrauaynes / and Gareth \* \* / the kyng \* \* \* desyred to lye by her / \* \* and he begate vpon her Mordred / and she was his syster on the moder syde Igrayne. \* \* \*

Capitulum XVIIII.

<sup>3)</sup>And thenne kyng Arthur \* \* came \* to the countrey of Camyliarde \* \* \* and there hadde Arthur the fyrst syght of gweneuer the kynges doughter of Camlyard / and euer after he loued her / After they were weddyd. \* \* \*

Incipit Liber Quintus.

<sup>4)</sup>Whanne kyng Arthur had after longe werre rested / and helde a Ryall feeste and table rounde with his alyes of kynges / prynces / and noble knyghtes all of the round table / there came in to his halle \* \* xij auncyen men / berynge eche of them a braunche of Olyue.

<sup>1)</sup> p. 64.   <sup>2)</sup> p. 65.   <sup>3)</sup> p. 63.   <sup>4)</sup> p. 160.

## Caput XII.

Cum igitur solennitas Pentecostes advenire inciperet, post tantum triumphum maxima laetitia fluctuans Arturus, affectavit curiam ilico tenere, regnique diadema capiti suo imponere. \*\*\* Venerunt ergo Auguselus rex Albaniae \*\*\*: Urianus rex Murefensium: Caduallo Leuirh rex Venedotorum \*\*: Sater rex Demetorum \* \* \*: Cador rex Cornubiae: \*\*\* Ex collateralibus etiam insulis, Guillamurius rex Hyberniae: Malvasius rex Islandiae: Doldavius rex Godlandiae: Gunvasius Orcadum rex: Lot rex Norwegiae: Aschillius rex Dacorum. Ex transmarinis quoque partibus, Holdinus rex Rutenorum \* \* Beduerus pincerna dux Normanniae \* \* Hoelus dux Armoricanorum Britonum \* \*

## p. 134. Caput XV.

\* \* In loco vero sancti Samsonis Dolensis Archipraesulis, destinatur Chelianus illustris Presbyter Landaviae, annuente Hoelo rege Armoricanorum Britonum: \*\*\* Dum (Arturus) haec inter eos distribueret: ecce duodecim viri maturae aetatis ramos olivae, in signum legationis in dextris ferentes \* \* \* literas ipsi ex parte Lucii Tiberii in haec verba obtulerunt: \* \* 'Etenim tributum Britanniae quod \* \* neglecto tanti ordinis imperio detinere praesumpsisti \* \* \* mediantem Augustum

in token that they cam as Embassatours and messagers fro the Emperour Lucyus / whiche was called at that tyme / Dictatour or procurour of the publyke wele of Rome / whiche sayde messagers \* \* \* said to hym in this wyse / The hyghe & myghty Emperour Lucyus sendeth to the kyng of Bretayne gretying / commaundyng the to knowleche hym for thy lord / and to sende hym the truage due of this Royamme vnto thempyre / whiche thy fader and other to fore thy precessours haue paid as is of record / And thou as rebelle not knowynge hym as thy souerayne withholdest and reteynest contrary to the statutes and decrees maade by the noble and worthy Iulius Cezar conquerour of this Royame \* \* <sup>1)</sup> After this the kyng lete calle alle his lordes and knyghtes of the round table to counceyl vpon this mater / and desyred them to saye their aduys / \* \* \*

## Capitulum Secundum.

\* \* \* <sup>2)</sup> And thenne euery man agreed to make warre / \* \* \*

## Capitulo tercio.

\* \* \* <sup>3)</sup> And there he ordeyned two gouernours of his Royame that is to say Syre Bawdewyn of Bretayne for to counceille to the best and syr Constantyn sone to syre Cador of Cornewaylle / whiche after the dethe of Arthur was kyng

<sup>1)</sup> p. 161. <sup>2)</sup> pp. 161, 162. <sup>3)</sup> p. 164.

proximi anni terminum praefigens  
Romam te venire jubeo: ut dominis  
tuis satisfaciens sententiae quam  
eorum dictavit justitia, acquiescas.  
\* \* \* Arturus illos in hunc modum  
affatus est.

p. 137. Caput XVI.

\* \* \* Haec et his similia  
eo dicente Hoelus rex Armorican-  
orum Britonum, caeteros praece-  
dere exorsus, in haec verba re-  
spondit. \* \* \*

p. 139. Caput XX.

Rex igitur Arturus videns  
omnes in obsequium suum unani-  
miter paratos, praecepit eis \* \* \*  
exercitum promissum disponere,  
\* \* ut Allobrogum fines cum ipso  
adituri Romanis obviam venirent.  
Imperatoribus autem per eorundem  
legatos mandavit, se nequaquam  
eis redditurum tributum, nec ob  
illud ut sententiae eorum acquies-  
ceret, Romam aditurum: \* \* \*

### Liber Decimus.

p. 140. Caput II.

\* \* \* Arturus, Modredo  
nepoti suo ad conservandum Brit-  
anniam, atque Ganhumarae reginae  
committens, cum exercitu suo por-  
tum Hamonis adivit.

p. 148. Caput VII.

Dispositis itaque cunctis,  
commilitones suos in haec verba  
affatur: 'Domestici mei, \* \* licet  
quinque annis inexercitati, \* \* \*

of this Royamme / And in the pres-  
ence of alle his lordes he resynde  
the rule of the royame and Gwe-  
neuer his quenē to them / wher-  
fore syre launcelot was wrothe  
\* \* \* Thenne the quene Gweneuer  
made grete sorowe for the depart-  
ynge of her lord and other / and  
swouned in suche wyse that the  
ladyes bare her in to her chambre.  
Thus the kyng with his grete  
armye departed leuyng the quene  
and Royamme in the gouvernaunce  
of syre Bawduyn and Constantyn  
/ And whan he was on his hors /  
he sayd with an hyhe voys yf I  
dye in this iourney I wyl that  
syre Constantyn be myn heyer and  
kyng crowned of this royame as  
next of my blood / And after de-  
parted and entred in to the see  
atte Sandwyche with alle his  
armye. \* \* \*

### Capitulum VIII.

\* \* \* <sup>1)</sup> Thus the bataill bitwene  
kyng Arthur and Lucius them-  
perour endured longe / \* \* \* at  
the last kyng Arthur aspyed /  
where Lucius themperour fought  
/ \* \* \* and \* \* anon he rode to  
hym / \* \* \* anon <sup>2)</sup> he smote hym  
ageyne with Excalibur \* \* \* / And  
thenne themperour fylle doune  
dede / and there ended his lyf \* \* \*  
And thus was the vycctory gyuen  
to kyng Arthur \* \* \* / Thenne  
the kyng rode straye to the place  
where themperour lucius lay dede  
\* \* \* and also syxty senatours of

<sup>1)</sup> p. 173. <sup>2)</sup> p. 174.

nequaquam tamen ab innata bonitate degeneravistis.

p. 154. Caput XIII.

Habita denique victoria illa, Arturus corpora procerum suorum ab hostilibus cadaveribus separari jubet: \*\*\* Hostes quoque suos miseratus, praecepit indigenis sepelire eos: corpusque Lucii ad senatum deferre, mandans non debere aliud tributum ex Britannia reddi. Deinde post subsequentem hyemem, in partibus illis moratus est: et civitates Allobrogum subjugare vacavit. Adveniente vero aestate, cum Romam petere affectaret, et montes transcendere incœpisset, nunciatur ei Modredum nepotem suum, cujus tutelae commiserat Britanniam, ejusdem diademate per tyrannidem et prodicionem insignitum esse; reginamque Ganhumaram, violato jure priorum nuptiarum, eidem nefanda Venere copulatam esse.

### Liber Undecimus.

#### Caput I.

(p. 155) \*\*\* Ut igitur infamia praenunciati sceleris aures ipsius attigit, \*\*\* confestim cum Insulanis tantummodo regibus, eorumque exercitibus in Britanniam remeavit. Praedictus autem sceleratissimus proditor ille Modredus, Cheldricum Saxonum ducem in Germaniam direxerat, ut in illa quoscunque posset associaret sibi, \* \* \* At ille peracto ipsius prae-

Rome al noble men / whome the kynge dyd do bawme and gomme with many good gomme aromatyk / \* \* and after he fonde thre Senators whiche were on lyue to whome he sayd \* \* \* And I commaunde yow to saye whan ye shal come to Rome to the potestate and all the counceyll and Senate / that I sende to them these dede bodyes for the trybute that they haue demaunded. \* \* \*

### The XXI book.

#### Capitulum I.

<sup>1)</sup>As syr Mordred was rular of alle englond he dyd do make letters as though that they came from beyonde the see / and the letters specefied that Kynge Arthur was slayn in bataylle wyth syr Launcelot / Wherfore Syr Mordred made a parlemente / and called the lordes togyder / & there he made them to chese hym kyng & soo was he crowned at caunterburye and helde a feest there xv dayes / & afterward he drewe hym vnto wynchester / and there he took the Quene Gueneuer and sayd playnly that he wolde wedde hyr / whyche was his vnkyls wyf and his faders wyf / And soo he made redy for the feest / And a day prefyxt that they shold be wedded / wherfore quene Gweneuer was passyng heuy / But she durst not dyscouer hyr herte but spake fayre / & agreyd to syr Mordredes wyll / Thenne she

<sup>1)</sup> p. 839.



cepto, octingentis navibus armatis Paganis plenis applicuerat: et foedere dato, huic proditori quasi suo regi parebat. Associaverat quoque sibi Scotos, Pictos, Hybernenses. \* \* \* Erant autem omnes numero quasi octingenta milia, \* \* \* quorum auxilio fretus \* \* \* Arturo in Rutupi portum applicanti obviam venit: et commisso praelio maximam stragem dedit applicantibus. \* \* \* Postquam tandem, etsi magno labore, littora adepti fuerunt, mutuam reddendo cladem, Modredum et exercitum ejus pepulerunt in fugam. \* \* \* Perjurus ergo ille revocatis undique suis, insequenti nocte Guintoniam ingressus est. Quod ut Ganhumarae reginae annunciatum est, confestim desperans, ab Eboraco ad urbem Legionum diffugit, atque in templo Julii martyris, inter monachas ejusdem caste vivere proposuit, et vitam monachalem suscepit.

### Caput II.

(p. 156) At Arturus acriori ira accensus, \* \* in tertia die \* \* civitatem adivit: atque intra eam receptum nebulonem obsedit. Qui tamen cœptis suis desistere nolens, sed ipsos qui ei adhaerebant pluribus modis inanimans, cum agminibus suis egreditur, atque cum avunculo suo praeliari disponit. Inito ergo certamine, facta est maxima caedes in utraque parte, quae tandem magis in partem

desyred of syr Mordred for to goo to London to bye alle manere of thynges that longed vnto the weddyng / \* \* \* And soo whan she came to London she took the toure of London / and sodeynlye in alle haste possyble she stuffed hyt wyth alle manere of vytaylle / & wel garnysshed it with men and soo kepte hyt. Than \*Syr Mordred \* \* wente and layed a myghty syege aboute the toure of London / \* \* \* <sup>1)</sup>Than came worde to syr Mordred that kyng Arthur had araysed the syege / For Syr Launcelot & he was comyng homeward wyth a grete hoost to be auenged vpon syr Mordred wherfore syr Mordred maad wryte wryttes to al the barownry of thys londe and moche peple drewe to hym \* \* \* <sup>2)</sup> and soo syr Mordred drewe with a grete hoost to Douer / for there he herd saye / that sir Arthur wold arryue / and soo he thoughte to bete his owne fader from his landes / and the moost party of alle Englund helde with sire mordred / the peple were soo newe fangle.

### Capitulum II.

And soo as sire mordred was at Douer \* \* there came kyng Arthur with a grete nauye \* \* / thenne there was launcyng of grete botes and smal \* \* \* / and there was moche slaughter of gentyl knyghtes \* \* \* But kynge

<sup>1)</sup> p. 840. <sup>2)</sup> p. 841.

illius illata, coegit eum campum turpiter relinquere. Qui deinde \* \* \* cito remige fugae evectus, Cornubiam versus iter arripuit. Arturus autem \* \* \* confestim prosecutus est eum in praedictam patriam usque ad flumen Cambula \* \* \* Porro Mordredus \* \* \* confestim milites suos per catervas distribuit, affectans vincere vel mori potius, quam praedicto modo diutius fugere. Remanserant adhuc ei ex praedicto numero sociorum suorum sexaginta milia. \* \* \* His itaque distributis quemlibet eorum inanimabat, promittens caeterorum possessiones eis, si ad triumphandum perstarent. Arturus quoque suum exercitum in adversa parte statuit, \* \* \* et \* \* hortatur (p. 157) ut perjuros et latrones interimant qui monitu proditoris sui de externis regionibus in insulam advecti, suos eis honores demere affectabant. \* \* \* Ipsi itaque commilitones suos hinc et inde cohortantibus, subito impetu concurrunt acies, et commisso praelio crebros ictus innectere elaborabant. \* \* \* Postquam autem multum diei in hunc modum duxerunt, irruit tandem Arturus cum agmine uno, quo sex milia sexentos et sexaginta sex posuerat, in turmam illam ubi Mordredum sciebat esse, et viam gladii aperiendo, eam penetravit, atque tristissimam caedem ingessit. Concidit namque proditor ille ne-

Arthur \* \* put sir mordred abak that he fledde & alle his peple / \* \* \* <sup>1)</sup> Thenne was it told the kyng that syr Mordred had pyghte a newe feld vpon Baramdoune / And vpon the morne the kyng rode thyder to hym and there was a grete bataille betwixe them \* \* \* at the last syr Arthurs party stode best / and sir Mordred and his party fledde vnto Caunturbery.

### Capitulum III.

\* \* and thenne kyng Arthur drewe hym with his hoost doune by the see syde westward toward Salysbury / and ther was a day assygned betwixe kyng Arthur and sire mordred that they shold mete \* \* \* <sup>2)</sup> / So than they \* \* came to syr Mordred where he had a grymme hoost of an hondred thousand men / \* \* and at the laste Syr mordred was agreyd for to haue Cornwayl and kente by Arthures dayes, After, alle Englund after the dayes of kyng Arthur.

### Capitulum IV.

\* \* And soo they mette \* \* / And wyn was fette and they dranke / Ryght soo came an adder oute of a lytel hethe busshe & hyt stonge a knyght on the foot / & \* \* the knyght \* \* \* drewe his swerde to sleethe the adder / & \* \* whan the hoost on bothe partyes saw that swerde \* \* <sup>3)</sup> than they

<sup>1)</sup> p. 843. <sup>2)</sup> p. 845. <sup>3)</sup> p. 846.

fandus, et multa milia cum eo.  
 \* \* \* Committitur ergo dirissima  
 pugna inter eos, qua omnes fere  
 duces qui in ambabus partibus  
 affuerant, cum suis catervis cor-  
 ruerunt. Corruerunt etenim in  
 parte Modredi: Cheldricus, Ela-  
 fius, Egbrictus, Bunignus, Saxones:  
 Gillapatriae, Gillamor, Gislafel,  
 Gillarium, Hybernenses. Scoti  
 etiam et Picti cum omnibus fere  
 quibus dominabantur. In parte  
 autem Arturi Olbrictus rex Nor-  
 wegiae, Aschillius rex Daciae,  
 Cador Limenic, Cassibellanus,  
 cum multis milibus suorum tam  
 Britonum quam caeterarum gen-  
 tium quas secum adduxerat. Sed  
 et inclytus ille Arturus rex letaliter  
 vulneratus est, qui illinc ad sa-  
 nanda vulnera sua in insulam  
 Avallonis adiectus, cognato suo  
 Constantino, filio Cadoris ducis  
 Cornubiae, diadema Britanniae  
 concessit, anno ab incarnatione  
 dominica quingentesimo quadra-  
 gesimo secundo. \* \* \* —

(p. 160) Caput IX.

Quid, ociosa gens pondere im-  
 manium scelerum oppressa: quid  
 semper civilia bella sitiens, tete  
 domesticis in tantum debilitasti  
 motibus, quae cum prius longe  
 posita regna potestati tuae sub-  
 dideris, nunc velut bona vinea  
 degenerata, in amaritudinem  
 versa, patriam et conjuges liberos-  
 que nequeas ab inimicis tueri?

\* \* \* — —

blewe beamous trumpettes and  
 hornes and shouted grymly. And  
 so bothe hoostes dressyd hem to  
 gyders \* \* And neuer was there  
 seen a more doolfuller bataylle  
 in no crysten londe \* \* \* /  
 euer they faught styлле tyl it was  
 nere nyghte & by that tyme was  
 there an hondred thousand layed  
 deed vpon the down / \* \* \* For  
 here [sayd Syr Lucan] we ben  
 thre on lyue / and wyth syr  
 Mordred is none on lyue \* \* \*  
 1) And there kyng Arthur smote syr  
 mordred vnder the shelde \* \* \*  
 And whan syr Mordred felte that  
 he had hys dethes wounde \* \* /  
 \* \* he smote his fader Arthur  
 wyth his swerde holden in bothe  
 his handes on the syde of the  
 heed that the swerde persyd the  
 helmet and the brayne panne /  
 and therwythall syr Mordred fyl  
 starke deed to the erthe / And  
 the nobyl Arthur fyl in a swoone  
 to the erthe. [The story of Bed-  
 were and Excalibur, and of  
 Arthur's last journey follows.]

## Capitulum VII.

2)\* \* \* and whan quene Guene-  
 uer vnderstood that kyng Arthur  
 was slayn & al the noble knyghtes  
 syr Mordred & al the remenaunte /  
 Than the quene stale aweye &  
 v ladyes wyth hyr / & soo she  
 wente to almesburye / & there  
 she let make hir self a Nonne \* \*.

1) p. 847. 2) p. 851.

To recapitulate: The argument of "The Misfortunes of Arthur" might almost serve as an index to the VIII. IX, X and XI books of Geoffrey of Monmouth's "*Historia Britonum*"; while, between the account of Uther's adultery and Arthur's passing away by Syr Thomas Malory, no less than nineteen books and about 800 pages intervene. No more than 10% of the whole deals with the actual story of Arthur as portrayed in the drama, and the remainder recounts elements wholly extraneous to both the history and the drama — such, principally, as the quest for the Sangrael and the adventures of the Table Round.

The general argument of "The Misfortunes of Arthur" has already been taken as the basis of comparison with Geoffrey of Monmouth's "*Historia Britonum*". It has already been proven, too, that the plot in its coarse outlines, as set forth in the general argument, is borrowed from Geoffrey. It will afford us a glance into Hughes' workshop, as well as strengthen the fabric of our argument, to set forth the full extent of his dependence on Geoffrey as his source — which is to say, too, how he used the material there gained.

We have already noticed that the dialogues develop nothing of moment in the way of plot and action, but consist, for the most part, of sententious moralizing, peppered occasionally with some lively stichomythia. All occurrences, then, are crowded into the mouth of a speech-maker, like the Nuntius, when he relates the progress and outcome of Arthur's wars in Gaul against Tiberius (II. i. 1—76); or when he describes the awful battle between Arthur and Mordred (IV. ii.). The story comes to light in other speeches, like that which Mordred delivers to his generals (II. IV.); like that which Arthur delivers to his generals and counsellors (III. ii.).

Let us examine these parts first.

Such a convincing similarity between the whole of the first scene of the second act of the play, and the eleventh chapter of Book X of Geoffrey's history, as to leave no doubt about the source, reveals itself in the following parallel passages:—

Geof. "Hist. Brit." X. XI. 15 (p. 152):

\* \* ipse etenim audita suorum strage, quae paulo ante eisdem dabatur, cum legione irruerat, \* \* excelsa voce atque verbis commilitones suos inanimabat, in-  
quiens: „Quid facitis, viri? Ut quid muliebres permittitis illaesos abire? \* \* Mementote dextrarum vestrarum, quae tot praeliis exercitatae, terdena regna potestati meae subdiderunt. \* \* Ne abeat ullus vivus, ne abeat. Quid facitis?“—Haec et plura alia vociferando, irruebat \* \* et cuicumque obviabat, aut ipsum aut ipsius equum uno ictu interficiebat. \* \* Viso igitur rege suo in hunc modum decertante, Britones majorem audaciam capessunt: Romanos unanimiter invadunt: densata caterva incedunt: et dum ex una parte pedestres hoc modo infestarent, equestres ex alia prosternere et penetrare conantur. Resistunt tamen acriter Romani: et monitu Lucii, illustris regis vicem illatae cladis Britonibus reddere elaborabant. \* \* Hinc autem Arturus saepius ac saepius \* \* hostes percutiens, Britones ad perstandum hortabatur. \* \* \* Fiebat itaque in utraque parte caedes abhorrenda \* \* \* Tunc multa milia Romanorum conciderunt. Tunc etiam Lucius imperator intra turmas

“Misf. of Arth.” (II. i. 10—47):

Tiberius courage gaue, vpbraiding oft  
The Romane force, their woont-  
ed lucke and long  
Retained rule, by warres through-  
out the world.  
What shame it were, since such  
atchiued spoiles,  
And conquests gaine both farre  
and wide, to want  
Of courage then, when most it  
should be mou'd.  
How Brytaines erst paide tribute  
for their peace,  
But now rebell, and dare them  
at their doores:  
For what was Fraunce but theirs?  
Herewith incenst  
They fiercely rau'd, and bent  
their force afresh.  
Which Arthur spying, cryed with  
thundring voyce,  
Fye, (Brytaines) fye: what hath  
bewicht you thus?  
So many Nations foilde, must  
Romanes foile?  
What slouth is this? Haue you  
forgot to warre,  
Which ne'r knew houre of peace?  
Turne to your foes,  
Where you may bath in blood,  
and fight your fill.  
Let courage worke: what can he  
not that dares?  
Thus he, puissant guide in doubt-  
full warres,



occupatus, ejusdam lancea confossus interiit. At Britones usque insequentes, victoriam, licet maximo labore, habuerunt.

Ibid. p. 154. Cap. XIII. 15—18: —

Hostes quoque suos miseratus, praecepit indigenis sepelire eos:

Ashamde to shun his foes, in-  
flamde his friends.  
Then yeelding to his stately  
Stead the raignes,  
He furious driues the Romaine  
troupes about:  
He plies each place, least Fates  
mought alter ought,  
Pursuing hap and vrging each  
suceesse.  
He yeeldes in nought, but instantly  
persists  
In all attempts, wherein whatso  
withstands  
His wish, he ioyes to worke a  
way by wracke,  
And matching death to death, no  
passage seekes,  
But what destruction works, with  
blade or blood.  
He scornes the yeelded way, he  
fiercely raues  
To breake and bruse the rancks  
in thickest throngs,  
All headlong bent and prone to  
present spoile.  
The foes inforc't withstand:  
but much dismaide  
They senselesse fight, whiles  
millions lose their liues.  
At length Tiberius, pierst with  
point of speare,  
Doth bleeding fall, engoard with  
deadly wound.  
Hereat the rest recoile, and head-  
long flie,  
Each man to saue himselfe. The  
battaile quailles  
And Brytaines winne vnto their  
most renowe.

Ibid. 48—53: —

Then Arthur tooke Tiberius breath-  
lesse Corse,

corpusque Lucii ad senatum  
deferre, mandans non debere  
aliud tributum ex Britannia reddi.

Ibid. p. 155. Liber XI. i. 6—7,  
10-11, 24—25:

Ut igitur infamia prænunciati  
sceleris aures ipsius attigit \* \* \*  
confestim cum Insulanis tan-  
tummodo regibus, eorumque exer-  
citibus in Britanniam remeavit.  
\* \* \* [Modredus] Arturo in  
Rutupi portum applicanti obviam  
venit: et commisso praelio maxi-  
mam stragem dedit applicantibus.

Ibid. p. 155. XI. i. 30—32:

Postquam tandem, etsi magno  
labore, littora adepti fuerunt,  
mutuam reddendo cladem, Modre-  
dum et exercitum ejus pepulerunt  
in fugam.

It is the Nuntius, again, who in a long speech, interrupted only by a few suggestive questions, acquaints us with the terrible battle between Arthur's armies on the river Cambula in Cornwall. It should be noted that Hughes follows his source in most of the salient points except in the case of the following deviation, which is, however, in no wise surprising, offering, as it does, a more tragic situation than Geoffrey's narrative: The History<sup>1)</sup>

<sup>1)</sup> Cf. "Le Morte Arthur", ed. Furnivall. 1864. pp. 137—8. Also "Morte Arthure", ed. Brock E. E. T. S. No. 8. pp. 125—6. Notwithstanding the agreement, in this instance, of Hughes with these poems, it is still held, for reasons already stated, that Geoffrey is the prime source.

And sent it to the Senators at  
Rome,  
With charge to say: This is the  
tribute due  
Which Arthur ought, as time  
hereafter serues  
He'il pay the like againe: the  
whiles he rests  
Your debtor thus.

Ibid. 53—58:

But O! this sweete successe  
Pursu'd with greater harmes,  
turn'd soone to sowre.  
For lo: when forreine soiles and  
seas were past  
With safe returne, and that the  
King should land:  
Who, but his onely sonne (O out-  
rage rare)  
With hugie hoast withstoode  
him at the shoare?

Ibid. 72—74:

What best deserueth mention  
here, is this:  
That Mordred vanquisht trusted  
to his flight,  
That Arthur ech where victor is  
returnd.

makes Mordred to be killed by an unknown hand in the thick of the fight; it is also a hidden weapon that deals Arthur his deadly wound. Hughes follows some other version — perhaps a French one, perhaps even that of Syr Thomas Malory — in causing the father and son to destroy each other.

Such a striking similarity appears from a comparison of the two accounts of the historian-monk and the dramatist as to establish the close relationship indicated: —

"Hist. Brit." XI. i. 11—14; 18—21  
(p. 155): —

Prædictus autem sceleratissimus proditor ille Modredus, Cheldricum Saxonum ducem in Germaniam direxerat, ut in illa quoscunque posset associaret sibi, et associatis quibuscunque, iterum citissimis velis rediret. \* \* \* At ille peracto ipsius praecepto, octingentis navibus armatis Paganis plenis applicuerat: et foedere dato, huic proditori quasi suo regi parebat. Associaverat quoque sibi Scotos, Pictos, Hybernenses, et quoscunque callebat habuisse suum avunculum odio. Ibid. XI. ii. 10—55 (p. 156):

\* cito remige fugae evectus, Cornubiam versus iter arripuit. Arturus autem \* \* confestim prosecutus est eum in prædictam patriam usque ad flumen Cambula. \* \* Modredus \* \* confestim milites suos per catervas distribuit. \* \* Remanserant adhuc ei ex prædicto numero sociorum suorum sexaginta milia \* \* \* His itaque distributis quemlibet eorum inanimabat \* \* Arturus quoque suum exercitum in adversa parte statuit \* \* et \* \*

"Misf. of Arth." IV. ii. 34—37.

Now that the time drewe on, when  
both the Camps  
Should meet in Cornwell fieldes  
th'appointed place:  
The reckelesse troupes, whom  
Fates forbad to live  
Till noone, or night, did storme  
and raue for warres.

Ibid. 43—48:

On Mordreds side were sixtie  
thousande men,  
Some borrowed powres, some Bryt-  
ans bred at home.  
The Saxons, Irish, Normans,  
Pictes and Scottes  
Were first in place, the Brytaness  
followed last.

On Arthurs side there were as  
manie more,  
Islandians, Gothes, Norwegians,  
Albanes, Danes.

Ibid. 98:

Then both the Armies mette with  
equall might,  
This stird with wrath, that with  
desire to rule:  
And equall prowesse was a spurre  
to both.  
The Irish King whirld out a  
poynsed Dart,

hortatur ut \* \* Iphis itaque  
 commilitones suos hinc et inde  
 cohortantibus, subito impetu con-  
 currunt acies, et commisso praelio  
 crebros ictus innectere elabora-  
 bant. Fiunt ilico in utrisque  
 partibus tantae strages, tanti  
 morientium gemitus, tanti inva-  
 dentium furores, quantos et  
 dolorosum et laboriosum est de-  
 scribere \* \* Concidit proditor ille  
 nefandus, et multa milia cum  
 eo. Nec tamen ob casum ejus  
 diffugiunt caeteri: sed ex omni  
 campo confluentes, quantum auda-  
 ciae dabatur, resistere conantur.  
 Committitur ergo dirissima pugna  
 inter eos, qua omnes fere duces  
 qui in ambabus partibus affuerant,  
 cum suis catervis corruerunt.  
 Corruerunt etenim in parte  
 Modredi: Cheldricus \* \*, Gillamor  
 \* \*. Scoti etiam et Picti cum  
 omnibus fere quibus dominabantur.  
 In parte autem Arturi Olbrictus  
 rex Norwegiae, Aschillius rex  
 Daciae \* \*. Sed et inclytus ille  
 Arturus rex letaliter vulneratus  
 est \* \*

That lighting pearced deepe in  
 Howels braines,  
 A peerelesse Prince and nere of  
 Arthurs bloud.  
 Hereat the Aire with vprore  
 lowde resoundes,  
 Which efts on mountains rough  
 rebounding reares.  
 The Trumpets hoarce their  
 trembling tunes doe teare:  
 And thundring Drummes their  
 dreadfull Larums ring.  
 The Standards broad are blowne,  
 and Ensignes spread,  
 And euery Nation bends his  
 woonted warres.  
 Some nere their foes, some further  
 off doe wound,  
 With dart, or sword, or shaft, or  
 pike, or speare,  
 The weapons hide the Heauens:  
 a night composit  
 Of warrelike Engines ouershades  
 the field.  
 From euery side these fatall signes  
 are sent:  
 And boystrous bangs with thump-  
 ing thwacks fall thicke.  
 Conan. But what? Did Mordreds  
 eyes indure this sight?  
 Nunc. They did. And he him-  
 selfe, the spurre of fiends  
 And Gorgons all, least any part  
 of his  
 Scapt free from guilt, enflamde  
 their mindes to wrath.  
 And, with a valure more then  
 Vertue yeeldes,  
 He chearde them all, and at  
 their backe with long  
 Outreached speare, stirde vp each  
 lingring hand.  
 Ibid. 138—etc.

There fell Aschillus stout of  
Denmark King,  
There valiant Gawin, Arthurs  
Nephew deare,  
And late by Augels death made  
Albane king,  
By Mordreds hand hath lost both  
life and Crowne.  
There Gilla wounded Cador,  
Cornish Duke,  
In hope to winne the Dukedome  
for his meede.  
The Norway King, the Saxons  
Duke, and Picts,  
In wofull sort fell groueling to  
the ground.  
There Prince and Peasant both  
lay hurlede on heapes.  
Mars frownde on Arthurs mates:  
the Fates waxt fierce.  
And iointly ranne their race with  
Mordreds rage.

\* \* \* \* \*

These odds indure not long, for  
Mars retires,  
And Fortune pleasde with Arthurs  
moderate feare,  
Returnes more full, and friendlyer  
then her woont.  
For when he saw the powers of  
Fates opposde,  
And that the dreadfull houre  
thus hastened on:  
Perplexed much in minde, at  
length resolves,  
That feare is couered best by  
daring most.  
Then forth he pitcht: the Saxon  
Duke withstoode,  
Whom with one stroke he head-  
lesse sent to Hell.



Not farre from thence he spide  
the Irish King,  
Whose life he tooke as price of  
broken truce.  
Then Cador foreward prest, and  
haplie mette  
The Traytor Gilla, worker of  
these warres,  
Of whom by death he tooke  
his due reuenge.  
The remnant then of both the  
Camps concurre,  
They Brytaines all, or most: few  
Forreines left.

\* \* \* \* \*

Of both these Hoasts so huge  
and maine at first,  
There were not left on either  
side a score.

\* \* \* \* \*

At length, when Mordred spyde  
his force to faint,  
And felt himselfe opprest with  
Arthurs strength

\* \* \* \* \*

He loathes to liue in that afflicted  
state,  
And valiant with a forced Vertue,  
longs  
To die the death: in which  
perplexed minde,  
With grenning teeth, and crabbed  
lookes he cryes,  
I cannot winne: yet will I not be  
wonne.

\* \* \* \* \*

So saying forth he flings,  
And desperate runs on point of  
Arthurs Sword,

\* \* \* \* \*

Whereon engoarde he glides, till  
 nere approcht,  
 With dying hand he hewes his  
 fathers head.  
 So through his owne annoy, he  
 noyes his Liedge,  
 And gaines by death accesse to  
 daunt his Sire.

Hughes had a drama to write, which, of course, required him to diverge from a mere metrical reproduction of the Latin history. Mordred and Arthur are, in the same breath, described by Geoffrey as in the act of exhorting their men to the onslaught. Naturally, Hughes brings into his play more art than lies in such a bald narrative, by first presenting Mordred as addressing his generals, Gilla, Gillamor, Cheldrichus, Dux Pictorum, Conan, in II. iv.; and then, in another act, III. iii., introducing Arthur as surrounded by his warriors, Gawm King of Albanie, Aschillus King of Denmarke, the King of Norway and a number of soldiers, whom he, in turn, animates to grim deeds of battle. Such use of raw material is to be expected from an author of taste and talent. For example:

Hist. Brit. (San-Marte) XI. i. p.  
 155; 14—17:

Spoponderat etiam se ipsi hoc  
 pacto daturum partem illam in-  
 sulae, quae a flumine Humbro  
 usque ad Scotiam porrigebatur, et  
 quicquid in Cantia tempore Vortegirni  
 Horsus et Hengistus posse-  
 derant.

"Misf. of Arth." II. iv. 17—25:

Mord: Right noble Duke, through  
 whom the Saxons vowe  
 Their liues with mine, for my  
 defence in warres:  
 If we preuaille and may subdue  
 our foes,  
 I will in lieu of yourso high deserts,  
 Geue you and yours all Brytish  
 lands that lie  
 Betweene the floud of Humber, and  
 the Scottes,  
 Besides as much in Kent as Horsus  
 and  
 Hengistus had, when Vortigern  
 was king.

That the compact, above described, is extended to other generals loyal to Mordred, is barely hinted at in Geoffrey. The dramatist's tastes and art, however, prompted him to work out the hint with more detail and dramatical coloring than belongs to the history, by making Mordred promise each of his chieftains a particular honor and reward in the shape of the "estates of their enemies if they came off with victory" (*promittens caeterorum possessiones eis, si ad triumphandum perstarent.* -- Hist. Brit. XI. ii. 23—24). This is one of the most readable sections of the play.

Not quite so significant a hint, but a potent one, nevertheless, gave occasion to Hughes' representation of Arthur's lengthy, though eloquent, speech to his assembled generals, before and after they had sworn him fidelity (III. iii.). Geoffrey gives a brief résumé of the supposed exhortation (X. ii.). It corresponds, in all essentials, with the one in the Drama.

"Hist. Brit." XI. ii. pp. 156—7.  
24—33 :

Arturus quoque suum exercitum  
in adversa parte statuit, quem per  
novem divisit agmina pedestria  
cum dextro ac sinistro cornu quadrata: et unicuique praesidibus  
commissis, hortatur ut perjuros  
et latrones interimant, qui monitu  
proditoris sui de externis regionibus in insulam advecti, suos eis  
honores demere affectabant. Dicit  
etiam diversos diversorum regionum Barbaros imbelles atque  
belli usus ignaros esse, et nullatenus ipsis virtuosos viris et pluribus  
debellationibus usis resistere posse, si audacter invadere et viriliter  
decertare affectarent.

"Misf. of Arth." III. iii. 23—46;  
102—130.

\* \* Yea let that Princocke come,  
With sodayne Souldyers pampered  
vp in peace,  
And gowned troupes, and wantons  
worne with ease:  
With sluggish Saxons crewe, and  
Irish kernes,  
And Scottish aide, and false  
redshanked Picts,  
Whose slaughters yet must teach  
their former foyle.  
They shall perceaue with sorrow,  
e'r they part,  
When all their toyles be tolde,  
that nothing workes  
So great a wast and ruine in this  
age,



This is the time that all our valour  
craues.

This time by due desert restores  
again

Our goods, our lands, our liues,  
our weale and all.

This time declares by Fates whose  
cause is best,

This, this condemnes the vanquisht  
side of guilt.

Wherefore, if for my sake you  
scorne your selues,

And spare no sword nor fire in  
my defence,

Then, whiles my censure iustifies  
your cause,

Fight, fight amaine: and cleare  
your blades from crime,

The Judge once changde, now warres  
are free from guilt.

The better cause giues vs the  
greater hope

Of prosperous warres, wherein,  
if once I hap

To spie the wonted signes, that  
neuer failde

Their guide, your threatning  
lookes, your firie eies,

And bustling bodies prest to pres-  
ent spoile:

The field is wonne. Euen then  
methinkes I see

The wonted wasts and scattered  
heads of foes,

The Irish carcas kickt, and Pictes  
opprest,

And Saxons slaine, to swim in  
streames of bloud.

I quake with hope. I can assure  
you all,

We neuer had a greater match  
in hand.



March on: delaie no Fates whiles  
 Fortune fawnes,  
 The greatest praise of warres  
 consists in speed.

It is not unlikely that Hughes had the opening words of Arthur's speech (as represented by Geoffrey - IX. xvi. 1-3 p. 136.) in mind while penning the first three lines of III. iii. The fact that the former was delivered before the battle with Tiberius and the latter before the battle with Mordred, detracts nothing from the argument of source:

|                                        |  |                               |
|----------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|
| Consocii (inquit) adversitatis et      |  | O Friends and fellowes of my  |
| prosperitatis: quorum probitates       |  | weriest toyles,               |
| hactenus et in dandis consiliis, et in |  | Which haue borne out with me  |
| militiis agendis expertus sum * * *    |  | so many brunts,               |
|                                        |  | And desperate stormes of wars |
|                                        |  | and brainsicke Mars.          |

Hughes' favorite expressions, "stately type of Troy", meaning London, and "promised seate of Brute", meaning Britain, are so beautifully explained by Geoffrey of Monmouth that we must quote him somewhat at length again: -

Hist. Brit. I. iii. p. 5. : —

"Aeneas post Trojanum bellum. urbis excidium cum Ascanio diffugiens, Italiam navigio adivit. Ibi cum a Latino rege honorifice receptus esset \* \* \* Ascanius regia potestate sublimatus, \* genuit filium. cui nomen erat Sylvius; hic furtivae Veneri indulgens, quandam Laviniae neptem uxorem duxit. eamque fecit praegnantem. \* \* Traditur autem ille [puer] nutrici, vocaturque Brutus." Brutus, after divers wars and adventures, arrives (ib. I. xl. 42 seqq.) "in quandam insulam, vocatam Leogeciam", where "venerunt ad quandam civitatem desertam, in qua templum Dianae reppererunt. In eodem imago Deae responsa dabat, si forte ab aliquo veneranti peteretur". The oracle, having been addressed by Brutus, gave answer thus (ib. p. 13):

“Brute, sub occasu solis trans Gallica regna,  
 Insula in Oceano est undique clausa mari:  
 Insula in Oceano est habitata Gygantibus olim,  
 Nunc deserta quidem: gentibus apta tuis.  
 Hanc pete; namque tibi sedes erit illa perennis:  
 Hic fiet natis altera Troja tuis:  
 Hic de prole tua reges nascentur: et ipsis  
 Totius terrae subditus orbis erit.”

After Brutus had entered Aquitania and ravaged it with fire and sword, he “prosperis quoque ventis promissam insulam exigens in Totonesio applicuit littore” (Ibid. I. xv. l. 57, p. 17.).

“Erat tunc nomen insulae Albion, quae a nemine, exceptis paucis gygantibus, inhabitabatur. \* \* Denique Brutus de nomine suo insulam Britanniam, sociosque suos Britones appellat. (Ibid. XVI. l. 1—2; 8—9) \* \* Affectavit Brutus civitatem aedificare \* \* \* perveniens autem ad Tamensem fluvium, \* \* locum nactus est proposito suo perspicuum. Condidit itaque civitatem ibidem, eamque Trojam novam vocavit: et \* \* \* tandem per corruptionem vocabuli Trinovantum dicta fuit.” (Ibid. XVII. l. 1—8).

What other version of the pretty legend of Brutus and New Troy than that of Geoffrey’s pleasing pen could have floated through Thomas Hughes’ fancy when he put these exclamatory words into the mouth of the Nuntius addressing the British shores? —

“Lo, here at length the stately type of troy,  
 And Brytain land the promist seate of Brute”

(II. i. 1—2).

What likelier source, again, for Arthur’s impassioned apostrophe to his suffering land? —

“Thou soile, which erst Diana did ordaine  
 The certaine seate and bowre of wandring Brute:  
 Thou Realme which ay I reuerence as my Saint,  
 Thou stately Brytaine, th’auncient tipe of Troy \* \*”

(III. iii. 47—51).

An alarming discrepancy between Geoffrey of Monmouth and Thomas Hughes would seem, at first thought, to present itself in regard to Mordred. That too thoroughbred young scion of the line of Brute is by Hughes sensationally charged with being the offspring of incestuous intercourse. (Cf. The general argument of the tragedy:

“Arthur delighted in his sister Anne, who made him father of Mordred.”

Now Geoffrey never mentions Mordred (so far as I have been able to find) as the son of Arthur, but invariably calls him his nephew.

Cf. “Hist. Brit.” p. 154, X. XIII. 21:

“Nunciatur ei [Arturo] Modredum nepotem suum \* \* ejusdem diademate per tyrannidem et prodicionem insignitum esse \*”

Cf. Ibid. VIII. xx. 25—28 (p. 118):

“Cepitque [Uther] Igernam et voto suo potitus est. Commanserunt deinde pariter non minimo amore ligati: progenneruntque filium et filiam. Fuit autem filii nomen Arturus, filiae vero Anna.”

Cf. Ibid. IX. ix. 6—8 (p. 128):

“Lot autem, qui tempore Aurelii Ambrosii sororem ipsius [Arturi] duxerat: ex qua Walgannum et Modedrium genuerat. \* \*”

Hughes rings the changes on this pungent bit of Senecan “*motif*” thus:

Arth.: My blood and kinred doubled in his birth,  
Inspires a mixt and twice descending loue.

(V. i. 91—92).

Arth.: And thou, O haplesse boye, O spight of Fates,  
(What mought I terme thee, Nephew, Sonne, or both?)

(V. i. 104—5).

Arth.: My Sonne, my Nephew, yea, each side myselfe —  
Nerer then all (woe's me) too nere, my foe.

(III. iv. 16—17).

Arth.: Well: t'is my plague for life so lewdly ledde,  
The price of guilt is still a heauier guilt.  
For were it light, that eu'n by birth my selfe  
Was bad, I made my sister bad: nay, were  
That also light, I haue begot as bad.  
Yea, worse, an heire assignde to all our sinnes.

(III. iv. 18—23).

Cf. Syr Thomas Malory's *Morte Darthur* (Oskar H. Sommer's edition), Cap. XIX. Book I., closing lines: "Kynge Arthur rode vnto Carlyon / And thyder came to hym Kyng Lots wyf of Orkeney in the maner of a message / but she was sente thyder to aspye the Courte of Kynge Arthur / and she came rychely bisene with her four sones \* \* \* / the kynge desyred to lye by her / \* \* \* and he begate vpon her Mordred / and she was his syster on the moder syde Igrayne \* \*".<sup>1)</sup>

As a matter of fact, the French version of the Arthurian legends was in Hughes' time very popular, and, as the Maloryan accretion in this particular instance suited his purpose --- which was to pander to a morbid taste for horrors --- there was no reason why he should fail to use it. In fact, there was every reason why he should do so.

Our author's work-shop shows itself no very inferior one from the manner in which he begins his play. He places himself in line with such shining lights as Homer, Virgil, Shakspeare, Milton, by going into medias res (we might say directly into medias res, if it were not for Gorlois' opening speech), and beginning with Guenevora's despair at Arthur's home-coming after his nine years' wars against Lucius Tiberius in France, which, as we already know, are described later by the Nuntius. Let the following excerpts from Geoffrey and the play serve to illustrate this:

---

<sup>1)</sup> It may be interesting, but hardly of much consequence, to compare, in this connection, Nastasi, in *Zeitschrift für das Realschulwesen*, XIX, Wien 1894. pp. 672—3.

"Hist. Brit." X. XIII. 20—25,  
p. 154:

Adveniente vero aestate, cum  
Romam petere affectaret, et montes  
transcendere incœpisset, nun-  
ciatur ei Modredum nepotem  
suum, cujus tutelae commiserat  
Britanniam, ejusdem diademate per  
tyrannidem et prodicionem insig-  
nitum esse; reginamque Gan-  
humaram, violato jure priorum  
nuptiarum, eidem nefanda Venere  
copulatam esse.

Ibid. XI. I. 38—42, p. 156:

Quod ut Ganhumarae reginae  
annunciatum est, confestim de-  
sperans, ab Eboraco ad urbem  
Legionum diffugit, atque in templo  
Julii Martyris, inter monachas  
ejusdem caste vivere proposuit,  
et vitam monachalem suscepit.

"Misf. of Arth." General Argu-  
ment:

Arthur — leauing his Queene  
Gueneuora in the tuition of Mor-  
dred, to whome likewise he  
committed the kingdome in his  
absence, 'arriued at Fraunce \* \*  
During this absence Mordred grew  
ambitious, for the 'ffecting where-  
of he made loue to Gueneuora,  
who gaue eare vnto him. Gueneu-  
ora hearing that Arthur was  
alreadie embarked for returne,  
through dispaire purposing diuers-  
ly, sometimes to kill her hus-  
band, sometimes to kill herselfe,  
at last resolved to enter into  
religion.

Ibid. Arg. of the first Act:

2. In the second scene, Gueneu-  
ora hearing that Arthur was  
on Seas returning, desperately  
menaceth his death, from which  
intent she is dissuaded by Fronia,  
a Lady of her Court & priuy to  
her secretes.

3. In the third scene Gueneuora  
perplexedly mindeth her owne  
death, whence being disuaded  
by her sister, she resolueth to  
enter religion.

Ibid. I. i. 33—35:

Gorlois: Let Guenouer expresse  
what frantiecke moodes  
Distract a wife, when wronging  
wedlockes rights,  
Both fonde and fell, she loues and  
loathes at once.

Ibid. I. iii. 68—77:

Guen: My death is vowed, and  
death must needes take place,



But such a death as standes with  
iust remorse —  
Death to the worlde and to her  
slipperie ioyes:  
A full deuorce from all this  
Courtly pompe,  
Where dayly pennance done for  
each offence,  
May render due reuenge for euery  
wrong:  
Which to accomplish, pray my  
deerest friends,  
That they forthwith attyrde in  
saddest guise,  
Conduct me to the Cloister next  
hereby,  
There to professe, and to renounce  
the world.

Ibid. I. iv. 20--24:

Mord: O Queene, my sweete  
associate in this plunge  
And desperate plight, beholde  
the time is come  
That either iustifies our former  
faults,  
Or shortly sets vs free from euery  
feare.

Ibid I. iv. 37—43.

Gven. Why dost thou still stirre  
vp my flames delayde?  
His strayes and errors must not  
moue my minde. . . .  
What, that I ought not to condemne  
my liedge,  
Nor can, thus guiltie to myne  
owne offence?  
Where both haue done amisse,  
both will relent.  
He will forgiue that needes must  
be forgiuen.

Ibid I. iv. 52:

G ven. It seru'd your turne  
t'usurpe your fathers Crowne.

Ib. I. iv. 62—63:

G ven. Suppresses for shame that  
impious mouth so taught,  
And to much skild t'abuse the  
wedded bed.

"Misf. of Arth." I. ii. 1:

G ven. And dares he after nine  
yeares space returne?

Ibid I. ii. 88:

G ven. And seemes it light to want  
him nine yeare space?

Ibid III. i. 193-4:

Cador. Haue Romaines for requir-  
ing but their owne  
Aboad your nine yeares brunts?

Compare further:

"Hist. Brit." IX. xi. 87. p. 131—

Emensis iterum novem annis,  
cum totius Galliae partes suae  
potestati submisisset, venit iterum  
Arturus Parisios, tenuitque ibi  
curiam.

In our examination thus far we have dealt with the greater number of names in the list of speakers, and have noticed that the principal ones are derived from Geoffrey of Monmouth's History; that occasionally, as in the case of Guanhumara and Walgan, the author of the play prefers the Anglo-French equivalents — Guenevora, Gawin.

There remain the following characters for a word of explanation: Fronia, "a Lady of her [Guenenora's] trayne"; Angharad, "sister to the Queene"; Conan, "a faithfull Counsellor" [to Mordred]; Gilla, "a Brytish Earle"; Cador "Duke of Cornwall"; Hoel, "King of little Brittain"; Gildas, "a noble man of Brytain".

Cf. Hist. Brit. (San-Marte) IX. v. (p. 125):

Rex igitur potitus victoria, Cadorem ducem Cornubiae  
jussit persequi illos.

Ibid IX. ii, 5—8 (p. 123):

Communi tandem assensu illato, mittuntur Armorican  
nuncii ad regem Hoelum, qui ei calamitatem Britanniae

notificarent. Erat autem Hoelus filius sororis Arturi ex Dubricio rege Armoricanorum Britonum generatus.

Ibid IX. ix. 10—13:

[Arturus] duxit uxorem Guanhumaram ex nobili genere Romanorum editam: quae in thalamo Cadoris ducis educata, totius insulae mulieres pulchritudine superabat.

Ibid IX. xii, 48 (p. 132):

Lot rex Norwegiae: Aschillius rex Dacorum.

Aurelius Conan is one of the kings of Britain succeeding Arthur (Hist. Brit. XI. iv. 7). In Geoffrey he does not play the *rôle* of adviser to Mordred.

Gildas is, of course, the well-known historian of British antiquity. Vid. Geoffrey I. i. 3.

Angarad: The name occurs in Geoffrey II. 8. as Angarad, who is a daughter of Ebraucus.

Gilla may be Gillapatriae, an Irish leader under Mordred (San-Marte XI. ii. 50).

Fronia, Gilla and Gildas thus appear to be creatures of Hughes' own imagination.

But Geoffrey of Monmouth is not the only source of "The Misfortunes of Arthur". It has been shown, in a preceding chapter, that Hughes is one of the chief representatives of the Senecan school, of which Sir Philip Sidney was a distinguished admirer. But Hughes was not satisfied with copying Seneca. He borrowed from him — to-day we should say, plagiarized; and, in his borrowing — or plagiarizing — he went farther than any other known author — so far that we cannot avoid pointing to Seneca as a very considerable source of "The Misfortunes of Arthur".

Dr. J. W. Cunliffe<sup>1)</sup> was the first to point out the extent of Hughes' indebtedness to the Roman playwright.

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<sup>1)</sup> "The Influence of Seneca on Eliz. Trag.", App. II.

Cunliffe's verdict, after a thorough and exhaustive examination, is to the effect that "the first act is little more than a mosaic of extracts from Seneca, pieced together with lines of Hughes' own invention". "Gorlois", he says, "quotes a number of lines from the opening speech of the ghost of Tantalus in *Thyestes*. The model chiefly followed in the following scenes is Agamemnon, Guenevora being moulded on Clytemnestra, and Mordred on Aegisthus"\*\*. "Fronia, in scene ii, and Conan, in scene iv, repeat the lines of the Nurse in the Agamemnon, Hippolytus, Medea, and Hercules Oeteus, and the servant in the *Thyestes*; and Conan also plays the part of Seneca in the *Octavia*."\*\*\* "The dialogue between Mordred and Conan in scene ii on kingly rights and duties, is borrowed partly from that between Seneca and Nero in the *Octavia*, partly from that between Agamemnon and Pyrrhus in the *Troas*." 1)

As many as 120 parallel passages are drawn up by Cunliffe, comprising about 300 lines out of a total of 2192. Most of these cover the first act. They have all been embodied in the notes to our text.

Comparison of these instances with their equivalents in the "*Tenne Tragedies of Seneca. Translated into English* — — — Imprinted 1581", demonstrates not only a more literal, but, invariably, a more graceful, rendering creditable to Hughes.

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1) Ibid. pp. 52 seq.

## Vita.

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Harvey Carson Grumbine, the author of this essay, was born May 1, 1869, in Fredericksburg, Pennsylvania, U. S. A., the son of Dr. E. Grumbine, Physician and Surgeon, and Annie Grumbine, *née* Beaver.

He received his early education from the common-schools of his native state; later, he attended Lafayette College, Easton, Pennsylvania, and, finally, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, where he was graduated with the degree of Ph. B., in the Spring of 1892.

After serving on the staff of instructors in the Central State Normal School, Lock Haven, Pennsylvania, until the Spring of 1897, he resigned to pursue a course of study in England, France and Germany. He matriculated at the University of Munich in the Autumn of 1897, where he heard the lectures of Prof. Dr. Schick and Privatdozent Dr. Sieper, in the domain of English Philology and Literature, of Prof. Dr. Breymann in French Philology and Literature, of Prof. Dr. Paul in German Philology, and of Prof. Dr. Muncker in German Literature. After a semester's study, he was admitted an active member of the Seminar of the English and Romance Languages.

To these eminent scholars he desires to express his sincere gratitude for their help and encouragement. Especially does he wish to acknowledge his many obligations to Prof. Dr. Schick, whose wide learning, delightful lectures and self-sacrificing interest in the individual student, are an inspiration to all who come within range of his voice.

The authorities of the University Library, as well as those of the Royal Library, of Munich, have invariably been ready to proffer their valuable books for the purpose of this work. Most particularly, however, is the author indebted to the managers of the library of



the British Museum, and to Dr. Richard Garnett, who was Keeper of the Books at the time when the original quarto-text of "The Misfortunes of Arthur" was transcribed, by their generous permission, for the edition about to appear in the "Litterarhistorische Forschungen."

Not only as grateful, but as very fortunate, does the editor wish to express himself to the Duke of Devonshire for graciously lending, for collation, his rare and precious copy, which, next to the text in the British Museum, is the only quarto known to be in existence.

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